Boston and Maine Railroad

Merrimack Valley

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PASSENGER DEPARTMENT, BOSTON & MAINE RAILROAD, BOSTON.
PICTURESQUE NEW ENGLAND SERIES NO. 10.

Boston & Maine Railroad and Connections
St. Andrews N.B. And About There
White Mountain Region
Mount Desert Island and Vicinity
PORTLAND
BOSTON
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND
NOVA SCOTIA
ATLANTIC OCEAN
GULF OF ST. LAWRENCE

BOSTON AND MAINE RAILROAD.

The Merrimack Valley.

ILLUSTRATED.

BOSTON:
ISSUED BY THE PASSENGER DEPARTMENT.
1898.

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ROAD NEAR MIDDLESEX, MASS., STATION.

THE MERRIMACK VALLEY.

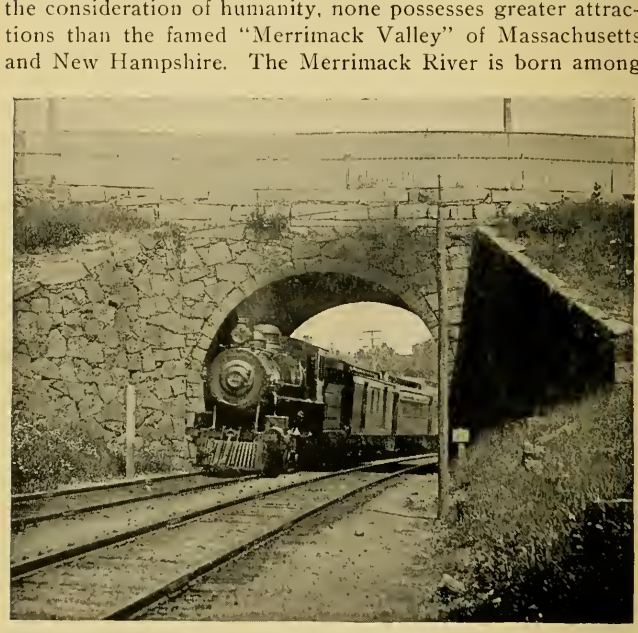
THE well-directed mortal who seeks in central or Northern New England a summering locality wherein sanitary, restful and recreative qualities of the highest type can be assured, is hardly in danger, be he native or stranger, of making a mistake in the selection of a situation into the make-up of which all these elements enter; for such abound on every hand in all sections of this favored region. Whether one seeks vacation pleasures along the lines where ocean waters fall upon grandest shores, and these unite to present magnificent scenic attractions; sojourns among lofty and rugged mountains, as wild and primitive in all their features as when fresh from the hand of the Creator; communes with Nature in the lake and forest regions remote from the usual haunts of men; or indulges in protracted dolce far niente in rural and farming sections, or amid the charming river and inland scenes such as are found in perfection in this morsel of the continent,—all the same the results of fullest gratification and entire satisfaction are sure to ensue, and his search to end in complete realization of his desires.

With great numbers of people, however, the highest ideal of summer or vacation life is that passed among the quiet, restful, kindly influences of "country" scenes and neighborhoods, where Nature is found in her most beneficent moods and manifestations, charming in all her situations and attractive to every person who feels in the least a desire to return to her allurements and rewards. For the tourist and wonder-seeker, the lover of the sensational—so to speak—in natural provision, lofty mountain upheavals, ragged and rugged ravines and gorges, or massive rock-cliffs overhanging rushing or rolling waters—these or their like abnormal presentations have power to arrest attention, and win a tribute of passing admiration and praise; but for "communion" with Nature, for genuine delight in and enthusiasm for her gifts and compensations, she must be sought where indeed she is most readily found, and where the simple-hearted, honest, manly contingents of humanity whom she delights to honor have always met and enjoyed her.

In every part of inland and central New England, then, these favored natural sections abound, usually presenting a degree of improvement and development consistent with the superb endowments accorded by their Creator. It is

often the case, too, in this region, that these rural hill and valley sections exist in close relation to the mountain, forest and wilderness creations; so that excursions may readily be made from the permanent or temporary home on the hillside, or by the river shore, to the wonderfully fascinating "show places"—the spectacular provision, not forgotten when New England was first formed for man's possession and delectation.

Of all the natural situations which this region presents for the consideration of humanity, none possesses greater attractions than the famed "Merrimack Valley" of Massachusetts and New Hampshire. The Merrimack River is born among



ARCH AT WALNUT HILL.

the mountains that surround the Pemigewasset Valley, in New Hampshire, and is a union of the Pemigewasset and Winnipesaukee Rivers, clear-flowing streams that come rushing down from the White Mountains' bases, uniting myriad crystal and cold brooks from the mountain sources before the onward course to the sea is fully entered upon below that beautiful Lake Winnipesaukee, which is so fair to look upon that even the Indians who first possessed the land could think of no more appropriate name for it than "The Smile of God."

The Merrimack Valley was endowed naturally as a summer resort; and so complete and exhaustive are the qualities and attractions of these sections, that the Indians, the original possessors of the New England territory, were impressed

by their manifestations in these localities, and revelled in the delights thus afforded in summer time, drawing largely upon the poetic fancies possible to their language in bestowing fitting and descriptive titles to the various features and situations. The utilization of every part of this valley and its neighborhoods as summering places by the whites began immediately upon the foundation of their settlements, wherever these took place; so that the summer homes and haunts of the Old Granite State have been from the first almost as well known to a constituency as wide as the country, as to the permanent residents of this New England State.

While the lake and mountain regions of New Hampshire attract through the grandeur, impressiveness and unusual natural endowments and manifestations that distinguish them, the valley sections appeal to every lover of Nature in repose, and of communion with her in her most beneficent moods, and under circumstances whereby her most potent influences are available to humanity in diversion, rest and recreation. The rural and farming districts of this State show each year much larger constituencies of sojourners, and pilgrims than do the mountain and gorge and primitive wilderness portions, that amaze all beholders by their abnormal natural presentations. The real summer communities of New Hampshire are to be found in localities such as are found in the river valleys and agricultural sections of the State south of the mountain bases; and for these temporary communities every preparation is made and accommodation afforded by an appreciative people, who rejoice in this influx of population annually made, and are not insensible to the sources of profit and the material help thus assisting in the battle for satisfactory existence.

The Merrimack Valley Route is one of the most important and interesting highways leading into the White Mountains region, of which it forms the western entrance. This route really begins at Boston, from thence running northward to Lowell and Lawrence (the great manufacturing centers) in Massachusetts, and Nashua, Manchester, and Concord in New Hampshire, and entering the White Mountains section via the shores of Lake Winnipesaukee, Plymouth, and the towns lying within and near the Connecticut River Valley.

Although the entire line thus constituted bears the name of the "Merrimack Valley Route," the territory of the Merrimack River is not entered upon until the line reaches Lowell, Mass.; but from this point until the shores of Lake Winnipesaukee are reached, the line follows closely the course of the river, serving all the towns and villages visited by it in

MERRIMACK RIVER, ABOVE TYNGSBORO.

its journey from the mountain bases to the great mill towns alluded to in the foregoing.

Lowell lies twenty-six miles northwest from Boston, and the course of the railroad to this point is through Cambridge, Somerville, a part of Medford, Winchester, Woburn, Wilmington and Billerica to the Mill City. All these are historic towns and localities of the Old Bay State, many of them intensely interesting in this connection, while they all have attractive features of their own which appeal to every visitor to or traveller through their territory.

Arriving in Lowell, the principal station of the railroad in that city will be found located nearly upon the very bank of the Merrimack, although hereabout that stream can hardly be viewed under its natural and normal conditions, its channels being confined within granite walls and various artificial constructions, its banks being builded upon until structures have far overlapped the original bounds of its shores, and its very courses having been arbitrarily turned and controlled, until it has apparently passed as completely under the control of humanity as are the beasts of the field or the provisions of Nature on every hand. Its characteristics and natural forces are better illustrated within these city limits, however, than could possibly be the case in almost any other situation throughout its course, its waters being utilized here to the fullest extent possible in furnishing motive power for immense manufacturing establishments, that have challenged the attention and admiration of the world for many decades past, and that furnish constant employment for thousands of workers, and channels for the use of millions of dollars in capital. The Merrimack River, cooped and confined within city walls of brick and stone, and transformed from a laughing, joyous stream into a fretted drudge for man's advancement, remains still a wonderful example of the beneficent providence of the Creator.

In Lowell the Merrimack passes through and by the city, visiting both the northeast and the southeast sections in thus doing. In the eastern part of the city its waters are joined by those of the Concord River, the last named affording valuable motive power by a series of falls in the neighborhood of the junction point. Other waters uniting with the Merrimack within the city are River-meadow Brook, which empties into the Concord River one mile above its junction with the Merrimack; and Beaver River, which flows into the Merrimack from Dracut. This great variety of flowing streams renders the natural scenery in their neighborhood beautiful to look upon. "From many points delightful water-views are enjoyed, especially the falls of the Concord as it passes Belvidere and the grand sweep of the Merrimack between the bluffs below the lower bridge." From the heights of Centralville and

MERRIMACK VALLEY, NORTH FROM HOOKSETT, N.H.

Belvidere "the long curving line of the Merrimack, the surrounding country, the distant peaks of Wachusett and the New Hampshire mountains, come grandly into view."

Lowell was an industrial city when, in the last decade of the last century preceding the present, "the Proprietors of the Locks and Canals on the Merrimack River" constructed a canal sixty feet wide on the right bank of the river, extending from the falls for a mile and a half to the mouth of Concord River. Upon this grand canal, with its lateral branches, are builded the great manufacturing establishments that distinguish the city of Lowell. The maximum force here possible to be utilized is about fifteen thousand horse-power, of which only about two-thirds is leased. Since the time of this establishment the Lowell locality has increased from half a dozen farmhouses to a city of nearly one hundred thousand inhabitants. The city has upwards of seventy-five mills, while the total number of its manufacturing establishments is upwards of six hundred.

The natural fall of the Merrimack at this point is about thirty-five feet, the dam being at Pawtucket Falls. Here the distance from the mouth of the Merrimack at Newburyport is thirty-five miles, and Lowell is nine miles above Lawrence, the city which shares with itself the distinction of holding a foremost position with regard to manufactures in this section. The city is well lighted, well drained, and has excellent water supply from the river above the manufacturing establishments It is one of the shire towns of Middlesex County, and has some very pretentious county buildings. Its streets are well kept and finely shaded.

The site that Lowell now occupies was once the headquarters of the Pawtucket tribe of Indians, whose chief attraction hereabouts was the excellent natural fisheries of the Pawtucket Falls and its neighborhoods. These Indians early came under the ministrations of the renowned missionary John Eliot, whose labors among them were very successful.

Leaving Lowell and proceeding northward by the Merrimack Valley Route, the inherent beauties of this famous stream soon became apparent. The Indians—who named originally this river, as they did almost every other natural feature and situation of the section which is now New England—followed their usual promptings in applying the title, which has a significance resting upon the attributes of the stream designated, Merrimack meaning "the strong and swift gliding current." From source to mouth the Merrimack is indeed a rapid, though usually not boisterous, stream; and partly for this reason it has in the course of time cut for itself deep and strongly marked channels in the midst of the bottoms through which it runs.

Immediately upon leaving the Lowell territory the Merri-

mack Route enters upon that of Chelmsford, the railroad station being in North Chelmsford. This is a pleasant country town of northern Middlesex County, with the Merrimack River along a part of its northern line. This is an ancient and pleasant town, rural in all its belongings and interests, and attractive in summer-time to many visitors.

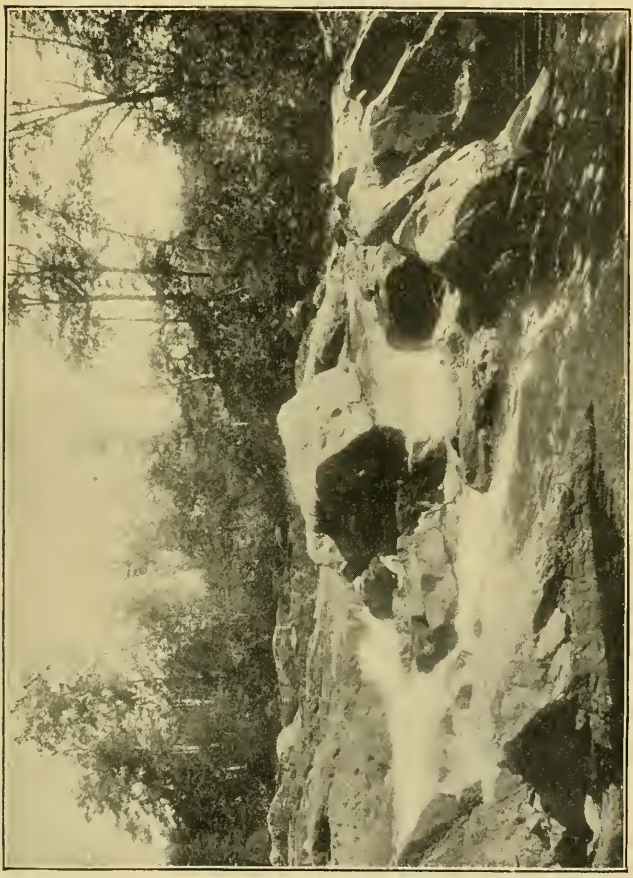
Eight miles northward from Lowell and thirty-three miles from Boston this route lies within Tyngsborough, through which the Merrimack flows, making a most picturesque curve in passing the central village. Hereabouts the railroad track skirts the river-bank and overlooks the beautiful stream for a long distance, presenting most charming views of ever-varying landscapes all the way. Nearly one-half of the area of Tyngsborough is in forests; and beautiful

MARTINS FERRY, ON MERRIMACK RIVER.

growths of elms and maples are found in every residential part, and on countless hillsides and eminences within the town limits. This place is also exceedingly attractive in summer-time, and most desirable for sojourning or temporary residence. Its northern boundary is the line between the States of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, and its immediate neighbor on the north is the thriving city of Nashua, in the Old Granite State, through which the Merrimack and its great adjunct, the Boston & Maine Railroad, pass in the closest union, as is the case in nearly every other section wherein the Merrimack Valley is found.

Nashua is one of the youngest community establishments of the Old Granite State—of New England, in fact. It lies along the boundary line between New Hampshire and Massa-

chusetts, and was not settled by white people until the present century was considerably advanced, although the Indians knew its territory well for many decades preceding this time, and King Philip with his cruel warriors were exceedingly active in this section in their day. Nashua is now an exceedingly lively manufacturing center, and a junction point for several railroads—the Worcester, Nashua & Portland, the



MERRIMACK RIVER AT GOFF'S FALLS.

Nashua & Acton and the Southern Division of the Boston & Maine Railroad System. It was not until 1853 that Nashua became a city; but its growth has been exceedingly rapid since that time, and it has one of the most attractive localities of the cities of its class in New England. Its territory is rolling, its drives of the finest, and its situation is eminently healthful. The Merrimack River runs directly through the

center of its site; and with this beautiful stream the Nashua River unites its waters within the limits of the city, the last-named river furnishing water-power for the great number of manufacturing establishments of the place, through a canal three miles long, sixty feet wide and eight feet deep, with a fall of thirty-six feet. These rivers and the beautiful outlying country about Nashua render the place exceedingly desirable for summer visitation and sojourning, while its healthful and recreative qualities enhance these conditions.

And now, the Granite State being fairly entered upon, the traveller by the Merrimack Valley Route finds that his interest in the journey increases with every mile of distance traversed, and with every bend and turn of the grand old river along whose banks he pursues his way. Sloping gently upward and backward from the river shores the richest farming lands come into the view on either hand, diversified and characterized by the natural features that render New England scenery so charmingly attractive, and displaying in picturesque and pleasing succession the evidences of the presence of enlightened humanity, which also distinguish the New England sections. Fine old mansions upon well-kept estates; public and private institutions that betray their character by their extent or architecture; modest farmhouses scattered here and there in favored spots along the valley; hamlets and villages, sometimes of scattered dwellings and buildings, and occasionally thickly clustered about some manufacturing establishment, or favored trading center,—all these evidences of the life of the valley neighborhoods are fittingly associated with the natural manifestations of its quality, so that merely to look upon the scenes that pass within the view carries the conviction that hereabouts is a summer land indeed, a vantage ground in every part of which the wearied, restless, longing denizen of the city or the heated centers of busy life may find rest, recreation and such communion with Nature as every way-worn specimen of humanity most ardently desires in the vacation periods of the year.

As in the State of Massachusetts, so in New Hampshire,—the valley of the Merrimack is set at frequent intervals with manufacturing centers that constitute almost invariably greater or lesser city formations, and which stand as centers of trade and commercial and social intercourse in a country otherwise rural and primitive in all its characteristics. After leaving Nashua and pursuing the Merrimack Valley Route through miles of courses upon which villages and "settlements" occur at irregular intervals, the first large community organization of the route is the city of Manchester, like its prototype in Old England, a manufacturing center of a quality that the whole world recognizes. Manchester is situated about midway between Nashua and Concord; the last named

LAKE MASSABESIC, N.H.

the capital city of the State; and it differs from its namesake on the other side of the Atlantic in that its features are about equally divided between the industrial and the natural, or, perhaps, it is nearer the truth to say that it has even more of attractive and desirable natural qualities than of the material attributes that give it importance as a business center. Manchester is the most populous city in New Hampshire, but its municipal belongings are closely compacted within well-defined limits. Outside these limits scenes of natural beauty and attractiveness take place immediately, and stretch away for miles in every direction.

Within the suburbs and neighborhood of Manchester are to be found more fine estates and residences than is often the case with New England cities of its class. The drives in every direction are superb, the territory is elevated and broken into hills of greater and lesser height in every direction, and the scenic successions all about are of the finest. From the lofty eminences the forest and valley views are exceedingly attractive, and the outlooks upon the river are grand indeed. Amid these scenes are provisions for summer homes and sojourning points, embracing every variety of such accommodations, from the life of the modest farmhouse and ordinary community dwelling to the more pretentious social assemblages of the summer hotel and caravansary. The whole section is admirably adapted to the desires and needs of the summer seeker, no matter under what conditions he has visited the Old Granite State.

Situated about four miles eastward of the city is beautiful Lake Massabesic, "a sheet of water so wondrously irregular in outline that, although it is only four miles across its widest part, it has thirty-one miles of shore in its circumference." This lake is studded with islands in every part, their shores and those of the mainland presenting miles of beaches of clean white sand, while often the luxuriant wood-growths come down to meet the waters, the whole presenting a series of picturesque and fascinating natural scenes of exceeding beauty. Like other natural formations within the Old Granite State, Massabesic has its "Devil's Den," while, as though to present the other extreme in its attractions, its "Fairy Grotto" has also delighted thousands upon thousands of visitors.

Practically, Lake Massabesic is a union of twin lakes, divided by a narrow ridge of sand beach, an opening at the upper ends of which comprises the connection between the two parts. There is fine fishing in this lake, as the summer sojourner in the sections roundabout early discovers, and as boats are in plentiful provision, and excursions upon its surface are always inviting, its natural endowment in this regard is utilized to the utmost. All around the lake, upon and near its irregular shores, are summer establishments in great va-

NEW FOSTON VILLAGE.

riety,—cottages, villas, chalets, boat and clubhouses and the like,—and the whole locality is given over to summer life of the most enchanting description. From every direction driveways have this lake as an objective point, and the whole section is enlivened throughout the summer season by the presence and movements of the summer colonists.

Manchester is the junction point of the Concord & Portsmouth Branch and Manchester & North Weare Branch of the Boston & Maine Railroad System.

Next northward from Manchester, and only a few miles removed from it, is the little manufacturing center of Hooksett, a mere village among the Merrimack River community establishments, but important enough in its way. The entry into Hooksett by the railroad is made via a bridge 550 feet long, the river making an abrupt turn at this point which necessitates this crossing as an economic measure. The site of this village is a part of the territory once presented by the State of Massachusetts to Passaconaway, a great sachem of the Penacook tribe. Hereabouts, too, the pious missionary John Eliot did noble work, both Passaconaway and Monnolancet, his son, being converted to Christianity through his efforts, much to the disgust of King Philip, who made use of all his arts and eloquence to pervert them from their faith.

Hooksett has a fine water power, which is excellently well improved; and besides the products of its mill establishment, ten millions of bricks are made here annually. The scenery upon every side is primitive and wildly attractive, Pinnacle Mountain, on the west side of the river, rising to semi-mountainous height, a pile of ragged, beetling crags, with outlooks over great distances in every direction from its sides and summit and having at its base a correspondingly dark and deep lake, whose waters have no visible outlet. As for the river itself, in the Hooksett locality it becomes exceedingly picturesque through its falling waters, the currents, rent and torn with myriad fragments, tumbling for considerable distance over a rugged and ledgey bottom of rock formations, the whole easily visible from the trains of the railroad that skirt the very edge of the scene as they pass. All about Hooksett the scenery is rugged and primitive, but none the less attractive on this account, and the visitation to its locality is large in summer time. The introduction to this variety of scenery at this point in the Merrimack Valley so far removed from the White Mountain region, and differing so greatly from the usual manifestations of the valley scenery, is unique in the natural provision made in conection with the Merrimack River, its appearance suggesting that a morsel of Franconia belongings had in some way been removed to this spot.

Be this as it may, from Hooksett onward to Concord, a distance of about eighteen miles, the river valley resumes the

KELLY FALLS, SQUOG RIVER.

characteristics in the south; and its quiet, rural and peaceful features have no superior in any part of the river's course.

Concord, the capital city of New Hampshire, is seventy-five miles north from Boston, and has about fifteen thousand inhabitants. It occupies a situation geographically about the center of the State, reckoning from east to west, with the ocean on the east and the Connecticut River on the west about equi-distant. It is a center of considerable historical importance, its site having been occupied by the Penacook tribe of Indians as late as the year 1725; but not long after this time these Indians were displaced by white settlers, who had obtained that section of territory by grant from the State of Massachusetts. It became the capital of New Hampshire in the early part of the present century.

This city is built along the west bank of the Merrimack River, upon elevated table-lands that overlook many miles of the fairest landscapes that New England can present. It is a manufacturing city of considerable importance, its industries being in great variety, and some of them having achieved notable distinction, as its wagon works, which are the largest in the world. It possesses inexhaustible quarries of the finest granite, specimens of which are found in the construction of public buildings in many of the States. An economic feature in which it takes great pride is its fine water supply, drawn from Lake Penacook, a beautiful water sheet in the northern section of the city. Its streets are broad and well kept and beautifully shaded; and its suburbs abound in natural scenery that would be considered remarkable anywhere, dotted with estates, establishments and institutions well fitted to the localities in which they are found. Here the Merrimack is crossed by numerous bridges; and of late years Concord has grown considerably on the east side of the river. From any standpoint the capital city of the Old Granite State is wondrously attractive; but with regard to its natural features, situations and characteristics it has no superior anywhere. "In the immediate locality of Concord there are no lofty mountains, no wild ravines or ragged wildernesses, no outspread lakes with rock-strewn and wooded shores, not even a tumbling waterfall in the river to attract by manifestations of natural eccentricity. The scenery of this locality is, instead, of the peaceful, pastoral order, and its attractions are of nature in perfect rest, and of softest and most soothing influences on every hand. The situation is of vast meadow tracts, stretching away from the river banks and from the clustered hills on which the city stands. Upon these meadows and intervales are some of the finest farms in the State, or, indeed, in the country. From the breezy hills upon which the city is built the outlooks extend for miles in every direction; and the boundaries of the views are marked by a fringe of low, wooded hills, an ad-

MILLS AT MANCHESTER, N.H.

mirable framing for a picture that can hardly be temperately described. The finest roads cross these lowlands in every part, affording delightful drives to the hill country on the boundary, and to innumerable attractive spots and localities within the sections. The elevations about the city command complete views of all; and from the top of one of them outlooks into every county in the State are to be had, including marvellous revelations of mountain-peaks, such as distinguish the scenery of but few portions of the earth's surface. In the midst the river flows, a quiet, winsome, fascinating element of beauty in the landscape, animating the natural features as the coursing of the life blood does the force of a healthful man."

It might go without telling that such a natural situation must attract hosts of visitors to its temporary possession and enjoyment with every summer that passes; and this is indeed the case. The sanitary perfections, cool and invigorating breezes, pure water, and the delights afforded upon every hand of the Concord territory, were early discovered by the multitudes that have thronged New England in summer time, almost ever since her occupation by white settlers; and this beautiful spot within the Merrimack River Valley long since acquired a reputation in this connection that the lapse of time has only broadened and strengthened.

From Concord a member of the Boston & Maine Railroad System known as the "Concord Division" runs northeastward to White River Junction, on the Connecticut River. This is an important line of travel to and from the west and north; and upon its route are some of the finest summering places known to central New Hampshire.

Nineteen miles from Concord on this line is found the town of Franklin, wherein the Pemigewasset and Winnipesaukee Rivers unite to form the Merrimack River. This town is noted for its numerous streams of clear, pure water, for the beautiful wooded hills in the midst of which it is found, and for the picturesqueness of its situation from every standpoint. It is a manufacturing center of considerable importance, and has a population numbering about thirty-five hundred people.

At Franklin the Bristol Branch of the Concord Division makes departure from the main line. This branch extends to the town of Bristol, a distance of thirteen miles. Bristol occupies a delightful situation, with mountains and streams on every hand, and it has become a noted summer resort for campers and fishermen, the well-known Newfound Lake being easily accessible from this point. A few miles beyond Franklin, on the main line of the Concord Division, the railroad skirts the shores of the beautiful Webster Lake, and has a station almost at its water's edge. This is a very attractive

AMOSKEAG FALLS, NEAR MANCHESTER, N.H.

watersheet, much frequented by visitors to the towns in its neighborhood, with a fine natural grove well equipped for the reception and entertainment of picnic and excursion parties in summer time.

Passing onward towards the Connecticut River, the next important town beyond Franklin is Andover, noted for its drives and beautiful watersheets, and for natural features interesting to every traveller or summer sojourner. Within Andover limits are Highland Lake and Eagle Pond, with Ragged Mountain overlooking the last named. Here, again, is one of the attractive summering places of the Old Granite State. At Potter Place, two miles beyond Andover, is the station for Mount Kearsarge, the grandest mountain elevation in this part of the State. All this section is thronged by visitors in summer time, ample accommodations for sojourners and temporary boarders being afforded on every side, and the localities being exceedingly desirable.

Danbury is thirty-nine miles from Concord and 114 miles from Boston. Here the territory takes on almost mountainous features, and the scenery is exceedingly picturesque.

Grafton lies next to Danbury, and within its territory runs the ridge which forms the watershed between the east and the west, a tributary of the Pemigewasset emptying into the Merrimack River on the eastern side, and the branch of the Mascoma River flowing into the Connecticut on the west. In this town the railroad occupies ground 778 feet higher than that of Concord. Like many of the surrounding towns, Grafton has a large number of fine ponds.

Beyond Grafton, on this line, is Canaan, a town noted for beautiful scenery and for its fine accommodations for summer boarders. Its localities are quiet and restful, and here the ideals of country life in summer time, in a rural farming locality, may be completely realized. Enfield, its next neighbor on the west, has become celebrated through its Shaker community, one of the most thrifty and prosperous assemblages of the representatives of this sect anywhere to be found. Here is the beautiful Mascoma Lake, and many other fine though lesser watersheets. The Shaker settlement is situated on the eastern slope of a range of lofty hills, in the western part of the town. Mascoma Lake is the center of a notable summering place, with summer cottages and camping grounds in great variety and abundance.

The terminal town upon this line, on the Connecticut River, is Lebanon, sixty-five miles from Concord and 140 miles from Boston. The Mascoma River makes a crooked course through the territory of this town, the railroad crossing it several times via covered bridges. Here is another very attractive locality for summer sojourners. White River Junction is in the town of Hartford, Vermont, and a connection

WHITNEY GROVE, MERRIMACK RIVER.

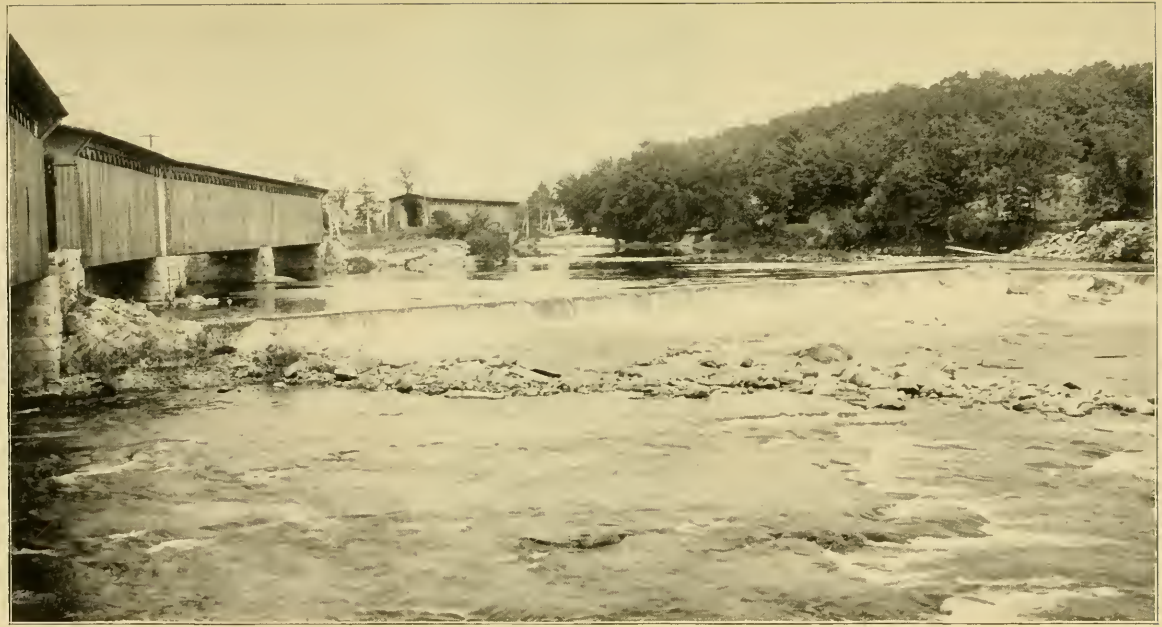
is made there with the Central Vermont Railroad and the Connecticut & Passumpsic Division of the Boston & Maine Railroad System, by means of a bridge crossing the great river. Hereabouts the meadow and intervale lands of the river bottoms are in marked contrast to the more rugged scenery generally characterizing the Concord Division.

Altogether the section of the State through which this division runs has a fine constituency of visitors and sojourners in summer time, while its natural endowments, and the facilities for their accommodation and entertainment, are unsurpassed by any of the rural and farming sections of New England.

Concord is also the starting point northward for the White Mountains Division of the Boston & Maine Railroad System, which division, passing over the interval between Concord and the Winnipesaukee region, skirts the great lake on its entire western side, passes from thence to Plymouth, which town lies at the gateway of the Pemigewasset Valley and the White Mountains sections, which latter it enters upon, after leaving Plymouth, on the western side and by the way of the towns lying between the bases of the mountain elevations and the Connecticut and Ammonoosuc Rivers. As the Merrimack Valley Route lies practically within a portion of this White Mountains Division of the Boston & Maine Railroad, the course of this line will now be traced from its leaving Concord northward until the town of Plymouth is reached.

Four miles out of Concord, then, passing northward, lies ancient Canterbury, also celebrated for its community of Shakers quartered in that village. A few miles further north is the town of Tilton, one of the most thriving and up-to-date community establishments of the State. Here the Commonwealth has located an establishment constituting a Home for Disabled Soldiers, and here, too, is the New Hampshire Seminary and Female College; and within the town limits are as fine an assemblage of beautiful residential buildings and artistic institutions as can be found in any New England center of its class in any part. At Tilton the railroad bids farewell to the Merrimack River and its valley, so far as the intimate connections between the three is concerned, as it has existed heretofore. The route now enters scenes characteristic of the approaches to the mountain region, and the natural presentations from this point onward are such as to give the traveller, especially if he be a novice within this territory, small reason for regret that the associations which have proved so attractive and pleasing to him cannot be protracted throughout his journey.

Tilton is ninety-seven miles from Boston, and is one of the most important centers north of Concord within the State. The original name of the place, after being settled by



HOOKSETT FALLS, HOOKSETT, N.H.

the whites, was Sanbornton Bridge, the present name being of comparatively recent origin, and given in honor of the principal family of the place. Like many other of the New Hampshire townships, the historic associations of this place are largely connected with the days when it was possessed by the Indians. Here at one time was the largest Indian fortress in what is now known as New England, works made up of lines of intrenchments, faced with stone and palisaded,—the remains of which are still to be found. Tilton has a very fine town hall, the gift of the present representative of that family name; and in every part of the town are establishments and memorials—works of art and foundations of utility illustrating the generosity and beneficence of the Tilton family.

Through this town flows the Winnipesaukee River, hereabouts a charmingly attractive stream, whose features have been seized upon for ornamentation and artistic and archi-

FRANKLIN FALLS, N.H.

tectural display by the benefactor of the place. Upon a lofty height overlooking the village a massive granite arch, a reproduction of the Triumphal Arch of the Champs Elysee, in Paris, challenges the attention and admiration of every visitor to the town. Artistic statues and fountains and the like are scattered about in various localities within the village limits, all testifying to the public spirit and home attachments of the Tilton family.

The territory of Tilton is broken and hilly, and the outlooks from the lofty eminences on every hand are grand indeed. At East Tilton great mountains become features in the landscapes; and from the higher hilltops great bodies of water come into the views, indicating that the lake as well as the mountain regions of the State will soon be entered upon. At Tilton is the junction of the Tilton & Belmont and Franklin & Tilton Branches of the White Mountains division.

Leaving Tilton and continuing the journey northward, the railroad skirts the banks, or passes within easy view, of the Winnipesaukee River; and within a few miles the shores of Little Bay, Lake Winnisquam and Great Bay are entered upon, with scenery of the most attractive variety and constantly changing presentations in full view from car windows as the train moves forward. These water surfaces constitute a chain of lakes or large ponds extending from the northern sections of the Tilton territory to the south western corner, or outlet, of Lake Winnipesaukee, which presents a fine culmination of the magnificent water thus afforded. Really the water passing from Winnipesaukee through this chain of lakes and streams is entirely delivered to the currents of the Merrimack River, although the Merrimack name is not bestowed upon the aggregation until the stream has reached the territory of the town of Franklin, as hereinbefore indicated.

The largest body of water constituting a member of this chain is Lake Winnisquam, lying a near neighbor on the south of Lake Winnipesaukee, and constituting a watersheet about nine miles in length and two miles in width in its broadest part. Winnisquam is an Indian name, signifying "beautiful water,"—and beautiful water this lake presents indeed, dotted throughout all its upper portions with lovely islands, surrounded on nearly every side by wooded hills, and a center in both summer and winter of employments and enjoyments, delights and pastimes, such as few watersheets in the country can present or make possible.

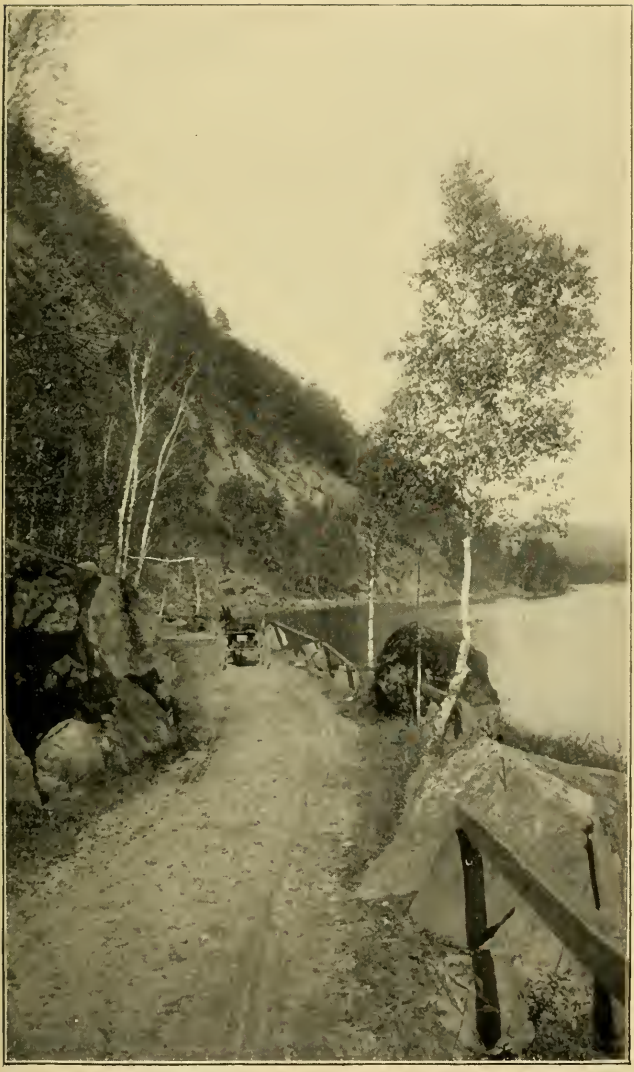
Along the eastern shore of this lake the city of Laconia is situated, with its outlying section, Lakeport—a part of Laconia—lying between it and the Winnipesaukee shore. Laconia is an industrial town of comparatively large importance, having great variety of manufactures and productions, which are prosecuted with a vim and energy that would insure success under any circumstances or situation. But the summer visitor will be sure to become interested in the place through its magnificent natural surroundings and attributes—the quality of its scenery, natural endowments, provision for summer sports and pastimes and recreations, and the facilities afforded for the perfect enjoyment of all these. Lakeport is the junction point of the Lake Shore Branch of the Northern Division of the Boston & Maine system.

A little more than eight miles to the northeast of the Tilton village, and almost overlooking Lake Winnipesaukee from the south, rises Mount Belknap, an elevation that seems almost to have been artificially moulded, so symmetrical and nicely proportioned is its mass. The outlooks from Mount Belknap are of the grandest, including Winnipesaukee, with all the lakes and mountains lying in its neighborhood—

and their name is legion—the Presidential and Franconia ranges of the White Montains, and sections of the Atlantic coast scenery along Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts shores. Upon a graduated scale all the hills above Laconia afford views similar to those from Mount Belknap, so that the scenic presentations of the locality have few superiors in any part of the State. Between the shore of Lake Winnisquam and the bases of the Belknap range the interval is occupied by excellent farms, the residences of the population dotting the spaces as individuals or hamlets in every direction, and collectively presenting that appearance of restful, quiet and inviting qualities, so highly prized and widely sought by vacation seekers of every sort in summer time. In all these sections the summer boarding house constitutes an important and characteristic feature.

MT. CARDIGAN, ALEXANDRIA, N.H.

Leaving Laconia and Lakeport, the railroad pursues its way northward, running along the very edge of Lake Winnipesaukee on the west, the shores of the great lake hereabouts usually presenting the feature of a cliffy formation, of no great height, to be sure, but often abrupt and insuring the advantage of views of the lake waters from a slightly elevated position. "Lake Winnipesaukee is one of the fairest watersheets in the world, with regard to the purity of its waters, the beauty and grandeur of its surroundings, or the attractiveness of its features and belongings. It is twenty-five miles long and from one to seven miles in width, and has an area of sixty-nine square miles. It is 472 feet above the level of the sea. Dotting its surface are upwards of three hundred islands, many of these of goodly size and amply large



NEWFOUND LAKE.

enough for habitation, and some containing dwellings or other buildings. These islands are the objects of excursions and exploration for myriad visitors in summer time. The beauty of the mountain elevations as seen from the surface of Lake Winnipesaukee, or from the line of its south shore, cannot be exceeded. On the north the whole of the Sandwich Range bounds the view from many standpoints, while Mount Washington and the Presidential Range, the Belknap Mountains on the south, and individuals of the Franconia and Moosilauke Ranges on the northwest, are constantly to be seen. Members of the Sandwich elevations send their steep declivities down to the very water's edge; and from the heights above the lake mountains thirty, fifty, seventy miles away are visible, according to the state of the atmosphere or to the view point occupied. Many of the larger islands and miles of the shore are beautifully wooded, the varieties of coniferous growth affording every shade of foliage green, from the sombre mourning effects of the hemlocks to the lighter effects of the cedars and savins, while the bright shimmering greens of the maples and birches, and the smooth masses of the oak and walnut foliage, blend in glorious harmony over vast expanses. Occasionally a stretch of white gleaming beach shows itself, bordered perhaps by frowning crags, or broken ledges of rock-masses, iron gray and strewn in wildest profusion. Among these features the quiet waters of the lake are constantly appearing, the very ideal of rest and peace. The assemblage of all these features in succession of natural scenes is fascinating beyond description; and the localities are few upon the face of the earth where natural attractions have been so lavishly bestowed."

The one community establishment upon the western shore of this lake is Weirs; and here, of course, the railroad has a station, directly upon and overlooking the lake. Here was a famous Indian headquarters in ancient times, and hereabouts the representatives of the tribes had their fish-weirs, by means of which they took great quantities of shad and other fish in their season,—and hence the name which the place now bears. Weirs is a great summer resort, and has become distinguished by its grove meetings and assemblages of society organizations within the season. Notable among the establishments of the place are the grounds and buildings of the New Hampshire Veterans' Association; and here are hotels and provision for the entertainment and accommodation for similar organizations and associations from any section.

From the lake front and the heights of Weirs the finest mountain views may be had, the Ossipee Mountains, Chocorua, Red Hill, Paugus, Passaconaway, Tri-pyramid, White Face, Sandwich Dome, Lafayette, and many other individuals and well-known ranges.

The natural features of Weirs and its neighborhoods retain still their primitive qualities, and are largely wild and unreclaimed, as was the case when the Winnipesaukee and Ossipee tribes were the only inhabitants of the section. The site is most picturesque, the territory rising boldly from the lake shore in successions of elevations and lofty hills, with forest growths a chief element in the belongings. Near the railroad station, on the shore of the lake, is the famous "Endicott Rock," a boulder twenty feet in circumference, upon which are carved the initials of the chiefs of the colonial survey of 1652, and the name and title "John Endicott, Gov." Weirs is the terminal station of the steamboats of the lake on the west.

Next north of Weirs lies Meredith, "one of the most pic-

PROFILE FALLS, BRISTOL, N.H.

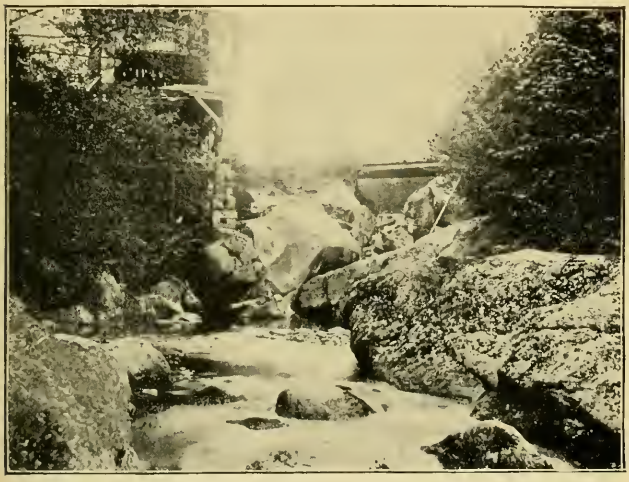
turesque of all the lake towns, and possessed of peculiar attractions and advantages for summer visitors." The Meredith village stands upon a bay making inland from Lake Winnipesaukee and constituting its extreme northwest section. As the waters of this bay have sufficient depth for the lake steamers, all the lake ports and every portion of the lake itself are brought into immediate connection with this town through these means. Within the Meredith territory are also a large number of lakelets, ponds and streams,—indeed, its water features form a principal charm of the place, and attract thither for visitation or sojourning a great number of summer seekers with every succeeding year. Centre Harbor is about five miles distant from Meredith, with an excellent highway for driving connecting the two places, so that ex-

cursions to that locality may be made by either land or water —an advantage that is sufficiently appreciated. Meredith has become a summer resort of considerable importance, and its growth in this direction is on the increase. For boating, fishing and water pastimes generally, and especially for camping, the place has few superiors.

Ashland is a village lying twelve miles north from Weirs, a thriving typical New England village, with natural situation and endowments that would render it attractive under any circumstances. Between Meredith and Ashland the railroad passes along the shore of another famous New Hampshire watersheet—Lake Waukawan—which it skirts for upwards of four miles. Lake Waukawan, however, is known locally in these days as "Measley Pond,"—a change in title which seems hard to justify under the circumstances. Within the limits of Ashland, the union of the waters of the Squam and Pemigewasset Rivers takes place; but not until the first named river has enlarged and outspread its volume into a succession of broad surfaces that are known as the Squam Lakes, a remarkable natural presentation that distinguishes the eastern and southeastern territory of this town, and which have become universally celebrated through the marvellous beauty of the waters and their environment. A beautiful drive is that from Ashland to Center Harbor on Lake Winnipesaukee, over an excellent driveway of about eleven miles in length, passing along the shores of the Squam Lakes, and presenting more of lovely scenery comprising mountains, intervales, and lake and river waters, than can be found in any other part of New England within similar limits.

Five miles northward from Ashland lies Plymouth the shire town of Grafton County, and possessing one of the prettiest of New England villages. This town has considerable of historic interest in connection with both its original possessors, the Indians, and their successors, the white settlers. In the ancient court house of this town the youthful Daniel Webster made his first plea before a jury. In the Pemigewasset House, the principal hotel of the place, and, indeed, the only one, Nathaniel Hawthorne died in 1864. The natural scenery within and about the place is exceedingly attractive, and especially the outlooks upon mountain peaks are notable. Mount Monadnock is a principal feature of the southwest, as is Mount Moosilauke in the northwest; and between these points, northward, eastward and southward for great distances, mountain elevations of individuals and groups and chains fill up the views. Near at hand is the junction of the Pemigewasset and Baker's Rivers; and the gateway of the Pemigewasset Valley, the "place of crooked pines," according to the Indian idea, is just beyond. The hills of the Plymouth territory—

and they are tumbled about in great numbers—might be called mountains in any locality that had not so vast an assemblage of lofty upheavals within sight as has this place; and they constitute the grandest standpoints from which to look upon and estimate the glories of the White Mountains region. As a headquarters for summer sojourning, and from which to make excursions into every part of the lake and mountain region of New Hampshire, Plymouth has few rivals and no superiors. The town and its neighborhoods are thronged with visitors and summer residents in the season, and the provision and facilities for their entertainment and enjoyment is profuse in every department. The place has all



BRIDGE AT GROTON, N.H.

the qualities of a mountain region center; and a ride of an hour or two will transport one into the midst of primitive scenes of wild and rugged nature such as are presented but by few sections of the earth's surface.

Returning now for another brief survey of the Merrimack Valley Route, it must be noted that, between Nashua and Concord, the main line of the Boston & Maine Railroad throws off lateral branches on either hand, which, passing through territory exceedingly interesting to summer seekers on account of the treasures of scenery, situations and satisfactory localities of which they are in search, merits some description in these pages.

MANCHESTER & NORTH WEARE BRANCH.

One of these offshoots, or spur lines, is the Manchester & North Weare Branch, extending from the city of Manchester northweasterly towards the Connecticut River to the town of Henniker, a distance of about twenty-five miles. This branch line follows nearly the course of the Piscataquog River, and ministers to several minor towns and villages of this central New Hampshire section. These towns are, in order beginning at the junction of the branch with the main line at Manchester, Bedford, Goffstown Center, Shirley Hill, Goffstown, Parkers, Oil Mills, Everett, East Weare, North Weare, Colbys, Henniker Junction and Henniker; or, rather, this list comprises the names of the stations at which the trains make stop in passing over the route. From Par-

NEWFOUND LAKE.

kers a short spur line is thrown off to New Boston; and these localities comprise all the objects of ministration of this branch. None of these places are of large importance, considered with reference to population, business and manufacturing interests, or magnitude of agricultural enterprises; but they all furnish admirable summer homes and temporary abiding places during the outing season, and thousands of visitors of the past can attest their beneficent sanitary and recreative qualities, and that of the communion with nature which they afford. Visits to these localities are comparatively inexpensive in every department, and all their advantages are visible in summer time to every class and condition of mortals that may be benefited by them.

CONCORD & PORTSMOUTH BRANCH.

Another—and considerably the largest and most important—of the branches of the Valley Line is the Concord & Portsmouth Branch, another off-shoot making junction with the main line in Manchester. This branch extends from Manchester due east to Portsmouth, on the sea coast, but its trains are run between Concord and Portsmouth as terminals. This line is not distinguished in any part of its location by unusual natural manifestations, having no mountains and not many lakes and streams to characterize its situations. The scenes through which it passes are chiefly rural and pastoral, well situated for domestic and homestead purposes, and inviting to humanity in every part. Of farming lands and agricultural establishments on either hand this

FARM AT ENFIELD, N.H.

route has no lack; and wherever these occur in the Old Granite State one may be sure that advantages for summer visitation and residence will not be wanting. Not only do the above brief descriptions apply to the immediate localities through which this branch is laid, but the sections on either side for considerable distances are of the same general character, and are readily reached from the numerous stations of the line.

Leaving Manchester, at the distance of five miles out is Massabesic Station, in close proximity to the lake of the same name, of which some account has been given in the forego-

ing pages. The people of the Merrimack Valley cities and towns greatly appreciate this lake and its neighborhoods, and from all sides flock to its enjoyments. From this station the trains proceed eastward via Auburn, Candia, Raymond, Epping (a considerable center), Rockingham Junction, Stratham, Bayside and Greenland to Portsmouth. At Rockingham Junction connection is made with the Western Division of the Boston & Maine Railroad System, by which one may make departure if he so wishes. Stratham is a town of about eight hundred inhabitants, situated on Great Bay. Great Bay is formed by the Piscataqua River making a grand inroad southward upon the mainland not far above Portsmouth, and forming an extensive watersheet which has received this name. Into this bay the tide ebbs and flows, and it often presents a busy scene of boating in summer time when the tide is in. The views about its shores are very fine.

MASCOMA LAKE AT EAST LEBANON, N.H.

At Greenland connection is made by stages with Rye Beach and various points along the ocean shore. There is some excellent fishing in Great Bay within the summer and fall seasons.

At Portsmouth junction is made with the Eastern Division of the Boston & Maine Railroad System, which follows generally the line of the ocean coast from Boston to Portland, the last-named city in the State of Maine. Portsmouth is beautifully situated on the seacoast of New Hampshire (the State has but sixteen miles of coast), at the mouth of the Piscataqua River. On the opposite side of the river from Portsmouth is Kittery, in Maine, the Piscataqua dividing at this point between the States of Maine and New Hampshire; and in Kittery is a United States navy yard,

which, however, is often called the "Portsmouth navy yard." Portsmouth has the finest climate on the Atlantic shore north of Cape Cod, and has become a summer resort of great importance and celebrity, its constituency representing every part of the country. It has beautiful scenery, fine sanitary conditions and superior natural and historic attractions. It is besides one of the oldest community establishments of the country, having been settled only three years after the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth.

THE SUNCOOK VALLEY BRANCH.

Another branch of the Merrimack Valley Line is known as the Suncook Valley Branch, its terminals being Hooksett

LEBANON, N.H.

and Centre Barnstead, which places are about twenty-five miles apart. This branch is laid in a northeasterly direction, and makes junction with the main line at Suncook, two miles northward from Hooksett and sixty-eight miles from Boston. Suncook is situated at the confluence of the Suncook and Merrimack Rivers; and it is a post village of the town of Pembroke, one of the most beautiful localities of the Merrimack Valley. As a matter of fact, Suncook is situated in both Pembroke and Allenstown, being found on both sides of the river at this point. A noted highway, known as "Pembroke Street," a broad country road bordered with ancient elms, extends from Suncook to Concord and has been a celebrated driveway for many decades.

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